

LONDON DAILY TELEGRAPH
6 October 1980

INTELLIGENCE WAR

THE KGB UPS ITS PRICE

By ROBERT MOSS

IT is almost impossible to find an intelligence professional in Washington today who has a good word to say about the CIA Director, Admiral Stansfield Turner. It is now widely believed that even if President Carter is re-elected, he will be replaced.

Adm Turner has drawn particular criticism from within the American intelligence community for allowing assessments to be skewed to fit in with the Administration's political needs and prejudices. Two analysts from the CIA's national foreign assessments centre are said to have resigned in a fury over the falsification of troop counts for North Korea—the deliberate downplaying of Pyongyang's military capacities, designed to justify a policy of disengagement from Seoul.

But what one former senior CIA official describes as "unbelievable" was the circulation of an internal memorandum warning the staff at Langley about an intensified campaign by the KGB to penetrate the agency.

£208,000 offered

The memorandum reported that the price now being offered by the KGB for a CIA case officer who is willing to work for the Russians as an agent-in-place is \$500,000 (£208,000). For a cipher clerk or communications officer, the figure is double.

"You don't spread that kind of news in a climate of general demoralisation," my source gloomily observed.

The effort to penetrate CIA and other American intelligence agencies, as noted in a previous column, is the special task of Pavel Bessmertnik, the high-ranking KGB officer—whose status is higher than that of the KGB *Rezident*, and who operates independently from the rest of the KGB station—who holds the cover job of Minister-Counselor at

Briefcase checks

In recent efforts to tighten security at Langley, Adm Turner has imposed a system of random briefcase checks. One veteran CIA officer comments: "As usual, he manages to get the worst of both worlds. The system is offensive to loyal CIA people, but also gets you thinking about how much could be smuggled out wrapped inside a shirt or stuffed under a brassiere strap."

Meanwhile, the CIA remains crippled by legal inhibitions in mounting foreign operations. Recently, the FBI asked the agency to arrange the coverage of a meeting by a suspected double agent with his KGB case handler in Mexico City. The CIA's general counsel objected that surveillance could not be mounted legally against a United States citizen abroad. The KGB kept its rendezvous without the intruding eye of the CIA.

Partner of the KGB

Soviet undercover operations are not the preserve of the KGB and its sister-service, the GRU, whose initials stand for Chief Intelligence Directorate of the Soviet General Staff.

Equally important, especially in dealings with Left-wing political groups in the West, is the International Department (ID) of the Soviet Communist party, which deserves its own share of the limelight.

Founded under Khrushchev in 1959, the ID has been headed since then by Boris Nikolaevich Ponomarev, whose previous services to the Soviet State included assisting Yuriy Andropov (present chairman of the KGB) to impose a reign of terror in Budapest after the failed uprising of 1956. The day-to-day business of the ID is supervised by its First Deputy Chief, Vadim Valen-

The ID deploys its own operatives in Soviet embassies abroad where their activities run parallel to the work of the KGB *Rezidenturas*.

Diplomatic cover

For example, Western analysts have identified three senior ID men working under diplomatic cover at the Soviet Embassy in Rome, one in London, one in Mexico City, and one at the Soviet Mission to the United Nations in New York.

One of their special functions is to organise the clandestine funding of Left-wing lobbies that further Soviet policy goals by preaching unilateral disarmament in the West.

The vast complex of Soviet front organisations, such as the World Peace Council, the World Federation of Trade Unions, and the International Association of Democratic Lawyers operate under the guidance of Ponomarev's ID.

Ponomarev's main achievement has stemmed from his belief that the Soviet Union should exploit—and subsidise—radical and Left-wing organisations in the West that are not subject to Communist party discipline.

This set him at odds with more doctrinaire thinkers such as Mikhail Suslov, the veteran ideologue and Politburo member who has long remained suspicious of the reliability of non-Communist movements on the Left.

Contacts expanded

As early as 1961, when he first attained the rank of party secretary, Ponomarev preached the need to channel largescale support to groups that are described in Soviet parlance as "healthy forces"—meaning individuals and movements that can be relied upon to carry out actions that favour Soviet policies without necessarily being subject to Soviet control.

He set out, with notable success, to expand the range of Soviet contacts with the Socialist International and its member parties, with Western trade unions, and with "pro-

Early on, he spotted the use that could be made of the Cubans, the Vietnamese, and other Marxist regimes in the Third World in order to gain access to—and influence over—Western liberals who would shy away from any direct identification with Moscow.

The Americas Department of the Cuban Communist party, responsible for subversion and covert action in the Western hemisphere, and its more recently formed sister-organisation, the Africa Department, were developed under the guidance of the ID.

Disruptive role

The ID is believed by Western analysts to have assumed a leading role in Soviet plans for industrial disruption in Nato countries. Significantly, the chief of the North American department of the ID (which covers the United States, Canada and the English-speaking Caribbean, including Belize), Nikolai Vladimirovich Mostovets, is a labour specialist who has written a book on United States trade unions.

Mostovets travelled to Washington with Ponomarev in January, 1978, to attend a conference of the World Peace Council. During their stay, they had talks with several American publishers and with a number of anti-defence activists.

The ID is believed to be taking an increasing interest in campaigns directed against Western transnational corporations, which offer the attractive dual opportunity to (a) practice industrial espionage while (b) helping to undermine the performance of Western economies.

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